

1902.

Medical Officer's Report.

In presenting the Annual Report of the Ringwood Rural Sanitary District for the past year I think the general health of the District has been very good, considering that the death rate is only 11.8 per 1000 compared with 15.1 for the previous year.

The deaths which occurred are distributed as follows:-

Ringwood	53
Burley	3
Broomy	4
Ellingham	3
Harbridge	5
Isley	3
Wakhouse	7

There were 7 deaths under 1 year, and 36 of 65 and upwards.

The 4 deaths in the Parish of Broomy occurred at the Linford Sanatorium and were non-residents.

Amongst cases under notifiable infectious diseases there were 8 cases of diphtheria of which 1 died; 17 cases of scarlet fever, amongst which there was no death. Also 4 cases of erysipelas, of which cases none proved fatal.

Amongst the other causes of death there were 2 from accidents.

In the month of June scarlet fever occurred amongst the children, so the schools were closed for 4 weeks and the disease consequently was

checked. The individuals and the premises which they occupied were inspected by myself and the Inspector of nuisances, but no satisfactory cause was found to account for the outbreak, except it had been brought in from outside the District.

In the same way with the cases of diphtheria, where it was found in one case to have been introduced by a servant from another part of the Country.

As regards the erysipelas they were all idiopathic cases, and were probably due to the dampness of the cottages in which the patients resided.

The Sanitary condition of the District is good, though in the Town of Ringwood there still remain a number of old cottages in a very bad state of repair, and are consequently damp and unhealthy. Many similar ones have been already reported upon and dealt with by the Council, and those still remaining will have to be dealt with in due course, and either put into proper condition or closed as unfit for habitation.

The sewerage and drainage of the District is fairly good. In the Town of Ringwood the earth-closet system is in operation, and the Council undertakes the emptying of the Closets twice each week, the soil being carried to fields away from any dwellinghouse. There is also a good system of drainage for slop and waste water.

At a few of the larger houses there are WCs, discharging into cess-pools which are emptied from time to time.

The water-supply is fairly good, the greater part of the District being upon a gravel subsoil, but in some parts where building is going on it is difficult to obtain good water. In the past year there has been no trouble with slaughter houses, dairies, cowsheds, milkshops, bakehouses and factories, all of these premises being in good order and meeting the requirements of the Public Health Act.

The Council have during the year been engaged in drawing up Building Bye Laws for the Parishes of Dursley and Ringwood, and these when approved will no doubt lead to the erection of improved dwellings and so add to the general health of the District.

The Council have also had under their consideration the question of providing an Isolation Hospital for infectious diseases, and have been in communication with neighbouring authorities with a view to joint action in making such a provision, but as yet no definite decision has been arrived at.

During the past year a systematic inspection of the District has been made with the Inspector of Nuisances and many cases have been found which had to be brought to the notice of the Council for alterations or repairs, and in all instances where this has occurred orders have been given by the Council for the work required to be done.

Medical Officer of Health
Ringwood
14th March 1903.

